

# Office of National Drug Control Policy

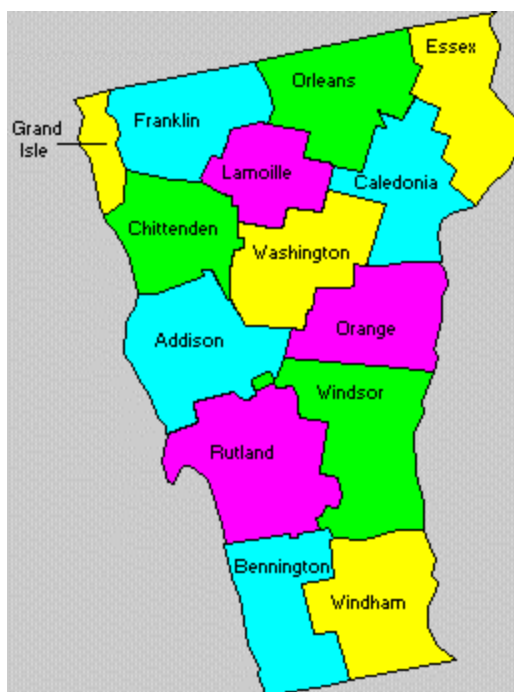
## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### Vermont

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#### Profile of Drug Indicators

May 2000



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Vermont**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population: 563,000 (1990 census), 594,000 (1999 estimate)
- Gender: 49% male, 51% female
- Age: 23.9% under 18 years old, 12.3% 65 years or older
- Race/Ethnicity: 98.6% white, .3% black, .3% American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut, .6% Asian or Pacific Islander, .7% Hispanic origin
- Percent of population below the poverty level: 9.9% (1998)

### **Politics<sup>2</sup>**

- Senate Members: Jim Jeffords (R), Patrick Leahy (D)
- House Members: Bernard Sanders (I-99)
- Governor: Howard Dean (D)
- Attorney General: William Sorrell
- New England HIDTA Director: George Festa

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- The New England HIDTA was designated in 1999 due in part to the high purity heroin found throughout New England and the criminal groups trafficking heroin and crack cocaine from New York to New England. Chittenden county Vermont participates in the New England HIDTA.  
The thousands of miles of coastline and the vast, desolate, U.S./Canadian border provides extensive opportunities for drug smuggling into the New England Region. However, the most significant Threat is the transportation of drugs from sources of supply in New York to New England and that is the major concentration of efforts for the New England HIDTA.<sup>3</sup>
- In FY 1999 ONDCP in conjunction with OJJDP awarded 2 community coalitions in Vermont funding under the Drug Free Community Support Program. The coalitions are:
  - Catamount Partnership for Community Health* in Bennington, Vermont (\$72,926): Formed in 1998, the coalition represents a merger of the social service coordinating group for Bennington County and the Healthier Communities Coalition. To reduce substance abuse, the partnership will employ efforts to: 1) increase the number of adults and youth engaged in activities designed to discourage alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; 2) decrease the number of parents who support underage drinking at parties or provide access to alcohol for children other than their own; and 3) decrease alcohol and other drug use among youth at Mount Anthony Union High.
  - Orleans County Prevention Partnership* in Derby Line, Vermont (\$99,839): The Orleans County Prevention Partnership, initiated through a five-year Community Partnership Demonstration program grant through the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, provides substance prevention services for Orleans County. To reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs use and improve life-skills, the Partnership will

focus on building positive life skills, such as decision-making and self-management skills, and on strengthening the bonds between youth and adults through "healthy role models." In addition, the Partnership intends to further involve youth in the community, to promote healthy beliefs and standards, and to improve collaboration and the coalition's capacity providing technical support and co-sponsorship of national and local training events.<sup>4</sup>

### **Crime and Drug-Related Crime**

- The number of drug abuse violations has increased from 2,052 in 1997 to 2,441 in 1999. However the total number of crimes has decreased from 75,871 in 1997 to 70,231 in 1999.<sup>5</sup>

Offenses Known to Police, Vermont 1997-1999

<b>Offense</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>
Homicide	9	12	17
Forcible Rape	236	211	162
Robbery	68	74	87
Aggravated Assault	357	439	421
Burglary	4,567	4,371	3,970
Larceny	15,140	13,867	12,676
Motor Vehicle Theft	922	926	975
Arson	185	188	180
Total Part I Crimes	21,484	20,088	18,488
<b>Drug Violations</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>2,324</b>	<b>2,441</b>
Liquor Violations	1,857	3,015	3,666
Weapons	206	200	966
DUI	3,747	4,284	4,731
Grand Total	75,871	73,370	70,231

- During 1998 there were 1,648 arrests for drug related charges, 1,543 arrests were for possession and 105 were for sale.<sup>6</sup>

Drug Arrests in Vermont, 1998

<b>Drug Type</b>	<b>Possession</b>	<b>Sale</b>
Marijuana	1,314	61
Cocaine	80	24
Prescription Drugs	64	---
Heroin	31	8
Depressants/Stimulants	29	7
Hallucinogen	10	3
LSD	15	2
Total Arrests	1,543	105

## Drugs<sup>7</sup>

- Marijuana: The drug of choice among the people of Vermont, marijuana use is on the rise among younger students. The majority of marijuana traffickers are local residents who get supplies from source states such as Texas, New Mexico, or Arizona. The costs of marijuana range from \$2,800/pound (commercial grade) to \$3,600/pound (sinsimellia, often grown hydroponically). The trend is moving toward plants being grown indoors, while outdoor cultivators are moving toward planting numerous small plots so that if several are eradicated, there are still more left to harvest. The most potent THC levels were 14.83% and 11.58%.
- Cocaine: The majority of cocaine entering the State is brought in from source cities (New York, Lawrence and Lowell, Massachusetts) by personal vehicle. It is usually distributed by local dealers, and the purity level of this cocaine ranges from 20% to 40%. Cocaine purchased in a source city for \$800 to \$1,000 an ounce is routinely sold for up to \$1,600 an ounce in Vermont. Dominican and other ethnic groups are making an effort to establish themselves as the sole source of drug trade in Vermont. An extensive organization of drug dealers are using local motels, pagers, payphones and safe houses to transport, deliver and distribute drug. Also emerging on the cocaine scene are the Los Solidos and La Familia street gangs who are actively recruiting members into the organization.
- Heroin: Heroin is sold primarily to an established group of users within the state. The heroin price in Vermont is high (\$10-15 per bag), with a purity level of 75-80%. Heroin users who are not able to get their usual supply of heroin will often shop around to doctors to get prescriptions for drugs such as Percodan or to steal prescription pads to forge their own scripts.
- Other Drugs: LSD, in blotter form, comes primarily from the West and is available sporadically. It is delivered through the mail and costs range from \$2 to \$5 per hit. Primary users are high school and college students.

## Juveniles

- A 1999 survey of Vermont students between grades 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> found that 30% had tried marijuana at least once in their lifetime.<sup>8</sup>

Percent of Vermont Students Using Illegal Drugs, 1999

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime Marijuana Use (1)	44%	51%	47%
Current Marijuana Use (2)	26	35	30
Lifetime Cocaine Use	7	10	9
Current Cocaine Use	3	7	5
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	4	6	5
Lifetime Injected Illegal Drug Use	2	5	4
Lifetime Use of Hallucinogens	16	23	20
Lifetime Use of Inhalants	16	17	14

1.Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life

2.Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey

- A survey was conducted on drug and alcohol use of Vermont's college students during 1998. The survey found that 47.6% of college students used marijuana in the past year.<sup>9</sup>

#### Drug Use by Vermont's College Students, 1998

Drug Type	Past Year Use	Past Month Use	Heavy Past Month Use
Alcohol	89.1%	76.3%	49.9%
Tobacco	51.5%	41.0%	25.6%
Marijuana	47.6%	34.3%	14.6%
Other Illicit Drugs	23.7%	11.4%	1.6%

#### Trafficking and Seizures

- The smuggling of illegal narcotics across the Canadian border is one area of concern for Vermont officials, as well as the increase in Dominican and other ethnic groups making a bid for the market in illegal drugs in Vermont. Along the Vermont/Canadian border there have been 53 significant drug seizures, not including 150 "zero tolerance" seizures that are handled administratively. The U.S. Customs began a northern border initiative in 1995, and while working with New York police have had significant seizures of drugs on the New York/Vermont border.<sup>10</sup>
- There were a total of 41,609 marijuana plants eradicated in Vermont during 1998.<sup>11</sup>

#### Marijuana Plants Eradicated in Vermont 1998

OUTDOOR OPERATIONS	
Plots Eradicated	160
Cultivated Plants Eradicated	4,806
Ditchweed Eradicated	35,224
INDOOR OPERATIONS	
Grows Seized	30
Plants Eradicated	1,579
TOTAL	
Total Plants Eradicated	41,609
Bulk Marijuana Eradicated	97
Number of Arrests	75
Number of Weapons Seized	13
Value of Assets Seized	\$15,945

#### Courts

- Of the 111 Federal defendants in Vermont during FY 1998, 36.9% had been charged with drug trafficking. The most common drug involved was powder cocaine (39%), followed by crack cocaine (34.1%), heroin (12.1%), marijuana (9.7%), and methamphetamine (2.4%).<sup>12</sup>

## Corrections

- The prison population in Vermont rose 14.9% from 1,312 inmates in June of 1998 to 1,507 in June of 1999.<sup>13</sup>

## Treatment

- There were a total of 4,642 admissions to drug treatment facilities in Vermont during 1997. The most common illegal drug clients were admitted for was marijuana.<sup>14</sup>

### Drug Treatment Admissions in Vermont, 1997

Drug Type	Number of Admissions
Alcohol	2,017
Alcohol with secondary drug	1,294
Heroin	111
Cocaine (smoked)	93
Cocaine (other route)	91
Marijuana/Hashish	645
Methamphetamine	10
Total Admissions	4,642

## Sources

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

<sup>2</sup> State of Vermont Web Site: <http://www.cit.state.vt.us/>

<sup>3</sup> ONDCP Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Vermont Department of Public Safety, *1999 Vermont Crime Report*, 2000

<sup>6</sup> Vermont Department of Criminal Justice Services Crime Byte Web site:

[http://170.222.24.9/cjs/crimbyt\\_index.htm](http://170.222.24.9/cjs/crimbyt_index.htm)

<sup>7</sup> State of Vermont, *FY 1997 Application for Funds Under the Edward Byrne Memorial Formula Grant Program*, 1998

<sup>8</sup> Vermont Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, *1999 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, 2000

<sup>9</sup> Vermont Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, *1998 Vermont College Alcohol and Drug Survey*, 1999

<sup>10</sup> State of Vermont, *FY 1997 Application for Funds Under the Edward Byrne Memorial Formula Grant Program*, 1998

<sup>11</sup> Drug Enforcement Administration, *1998 Domestic Cannabis Eradication /Suppression Program Statistical Report*, March 1999

<sup>12</sup> United States Sentencing Commission Web site: <http://www.ussc.gov>

<sup>13</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 1999*, April 2000

<sup>14</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) 1992-1997, National Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities*, August 1999

This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues, contact:

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